5: Harrison D-4 (1912-1924) 1924 M1 Middle East
Bedouin M34

where wells are somewhat close together and the for- 312
age of the country allows it, goats can be kept, but these 233
must be watered at least once a day. They furnish hair 342
for tent-cloth, and thus it is the goat that shelters the
Bedouin from the elements. In districts where forage [234
and water are still more abundant, sheep are raised, 439]
chiefly for their wool or as articles of export. Mutton is 262
the favorite meat all over Arabia, and although for a les- 574
ser occasion goats or camels may answer, when a great
sheikh gives a feast, sheep are the animals slaughtered.

Much has been written, and justly, about the beauty 231
and the endurance of Arabian horses, but they are not an 556
economic asset. In Central Arabia a horse is a pure lux-
ury. Often in summer they must live on camel's milk
just as humans do. They are kept and treated as house-
hold pets and are very intelligent and affectionate. Their
only function is to furnish an aristocratic mount for
pleasure, for state occasions and for war. During part
of the year there is abundant pasturage for them, but
they are a luxury afforded only by the sheikhs and the
very rich and their number is small.

There are years in Arabia when the spring rains fail 731
partially or completely, and then the animals die by thou- 789
sands, or are driven to the nearest town to be sold for a 262
song. In such years starvation stalks abroad through the
land. Little children die because there is no food suit-
able for such tender stomachs, and the adults are even
more gaunt and thin than usual. The sheikhs are nearly
bankrupted by the number of poor they have to feed,
and the whole community waits and prays for more rain
the coming spring.

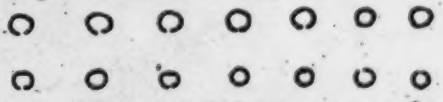
At the best the life of a desert Bedouin is one of a 511
poverty so bitter and deep that Westerners have little idea
of it. The entire outfit of a family could be bought for a
mere trifle.

k Dickson G-5 (1929-47) 1951 MI 1 Kuwait
Bedouins MJ4

Primitive Backgammon

Chap. XLI

Each player digs in the sand seven small holes in a line, opposite each other, placing in each five stones. 524



Each player in turn picks up all the stones out of any one hole on his side, and distributes them one by one anti-clockwise in the other holes, beginning at the first hole on the right of the one from which he has taken the stones. Should the last stone end in a hole which either contains one or three stones (not two), the player may "take" them, and place them on one side: also if the one immediately next to it on the right, into which a stone has been put, contains either one or three, it may also be taken.

The game is finished when all the fourteen holes are empty. The stones are then replaced, five in each hole, instead of being counted (ready for the next game).

The player whose stones exceed the number needed to fill the holes in his line wins.

Another variety of this game is called Umm al Judairah, in which the holes are placed in a circle with one in centre.

KHITAB SULAIMAN BIN DAÚD

On 12th December I happened to visit Sálim al Muzaiyin's tents 789
and those of the Al Kharmit ('Awazim). They were all pitched in a hollow on the west side of the Dhahar ridge, some 15 miles from Kuwait. The day was fine and warm.

Outside Salim's tent and opposite the women's quarters I saw a large black ants' nest, with ants busy all over it. There were two main entrances for the ants to go in and out of the nest, some 4 feet apart.

Round the whole nest was drawn a wide circle by means of a shallow trench an inch deep, and inside the circle were placed two ropes in the form of a circle, which are used for binding the poles of the tent together when on the march. They are used for no other purpose.

The large circle had a diameter of about 12 feet, and the small rope circles were about 1 ft. 6 in. in diameter.

k. Dickson G-5 (1929-47) 1951 MI 1 Kuwait
Bedouins MJ4

Solomon's Circle

●789

"A" Mark on ground in form of shallow trench known as the mark of Solomon, son of David.
"B" The two ropes laid in the form of rings.

I asked the women of the tent what game they or their children had been playing, and they came forward and explained that it was not a game, but "The circle of Solomon the son of David", or "Khitab al Sulaiman bin Dawud", to give it the Arabic name they used.

They explained that they had not noticed the ants' nest when they had pitched their tent; afterwards seeing it, and knowing that the ants would swarm into their tents and steal their rice and grain, etc., they had put the ring of Solomon round the ants to keep them from being a nuisance. This ring would effectually prevent any ants troubling them, they said, for none could or would dare to cross the edge of Solomon's circle. I next asked Atsha, the lady of the house, if any incantation or verse was necessary to be spoken to make the ants obey, and she said simply, "Yes, O Father of Sa'ud, for the circle alone can do nothing": at my request she repeated same. It was as follows:

"Hadha Khitab Sulaiman bin Daúd,
Bism'illa al Rahmán al Rahím,
La tijina wa la nijikum."

(Here is the mark or ring of Solomon, son of David, in the name of God the Merciful the Compassionate, do not come near unto us, and we will not come near you.)

A little rice, barley or wheat was then, she said, given to the ants as a present, and they would not harm them or come near them.

When I expressed surprise, and suggested that I was sceptical of the power of the circle, Atsha said reprovingly that I must not doubt the circle's power after the name of God had been invoked. The results were always perfectly satisfactory, and the method was employed by all Badawin everywhere.

I was so interested that I decided to note the phenomenon down.

k Dickson G-5 (1929-47) 1951 MI 1 Kuwait
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789

I leave my readers to form their own opinion as to the efficacy of the method and the age of the ritual. In fairness I must admit that I certainly saw no ants on the outside of the circle, though they swarmed at the two entrances to the nest. Possibly the present of grain had done the trick.

Azaba further explained that the two small circles inside the large one had to be made by the ropes which were specifically always used to bind the tent poles together, when the family was on the move. Any other sort of rope would be quite useless, and would render the spell ineffective.

L Dickson G-5 (1929-47) 1951 MI 1 Kuwait
Bedouins MJ4

meet the tip of the centre finger of the other hand. If this happens, 787
the undertaking will be attended with good luck. If exact contact does not take place, then on no account must the undertaking be carried out. This test is usually made three times.

Authority, Shaikh of Kuwait, 11 August, 1932.

NOTE.—Friday journeys or undertakings are quite legitimate but 777
only after noonday prayer has been performed. Never before.

TO BRING LUCK

When a Badawin eats dates, he throws the stones over his shoulder, believing that each stone so thrown means a camel acquired in a raid

Shaikh of Kuwait, 28th May, 1935.

TO BECOME A GOOD SHOT

If a Badawin wants to become a good shot, the common method 789 ●
is to light a piece of cloth (cotton or wool) made up into a small ball. This as it smoulders is held very close to the right forearm, four inches behind the wrist knuckle bone. The ball should not be alight, but only smouldering, nor must the actual cloth ball be applied to the flesh. The heat of the burning piece of cloth soon raises a large blister about the size of a small matchbox. When this happens the operation is complete and the burning cloth is removed. Later the blister bursts and leaves an oblong raw spot, which in turn when it heals, leaves a scar to the man's dying day. This painful ordeal is considered among the Badawin to insure that the patient becomes a good shot with the rifle.

The present Shaikh of Kuwait had the operation done to him as a young man, and certainly he is a remarkable shot.

TO ACQUIRE COURAGE

Shaikh 'Ali al Khalifah told me on 12th November, 1938, that 828
among certain Badawin it was not uncommon for a man to eat the liver of a wolf to make him brave.

1: Dickson G-5 (1929-47) 1951 MI 1 Kuwait
Bedouins MJ4

Appendix XXVIII

APPENDIX XXVIII

Ref. Chapter XXXII. Camel Wasms

233
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422

The following additional Wasms should be noted.

1. Under *Mutair Tribe* after (*s*), p. 423, add:
   (*t*) Al Ammásh (Al Ruaichib)
   On left cheek

2. Under *Bani Khalid* after (*b*), p. 425, add:
   (*c*) Ibn Mendíl
   On right thigh

3. Add (13) *Murra Tribe:*
   (*a*) Nigadan (Al Mugasse)
   Low on right thigh
   (*b*) Mohomed ibn Salim
   On left side of neck

APPENDIX XXIX

KHITAB SULAIMAN BIN DAUD

(End of Chapter XLV)

The method of confining ants to their nest by means of Solomon's Magic Circle, was confirmed to me on April 15, 1948 by Salim al Murri and Saleh al Uhaimir, both trackers of the Murra tribe employed by H.H. the Shaikh of Kuwait when I visited their camp and was chatting to them and their womenfolk over a cup of coffee.

Both assured me that the circle did work but (*a*) that the circle must be made anti-clockwise, and that the ants could only be released if the motion of making the circle was again gone through, but this time clockwise. That this was always done when about to strike camp, as then the ants had to be released.

(*b*) The circle could only be made effective by the grown-up children (male and female) of first cousins. For other people to draw the circle was useless, and the ants would take no notice. (*c*) Food had to be given to the imprisoned ants at noon and sunset each day.